

# The Spanish River Papers

FEBRUARY 1982

VOL. X, No. 2



OLD CITY HALL, HOME OF BOCA RATON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Jeanne Nixon Baur, Artist

A report to the membership of

## Boca Raton Historical Society, Inc.

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# Handmade Pottery



MADE  
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## MIZNER INDUSTRIES INC.

337 WORTH AVE, PALM BEACH FLA.

Established 1919

Pottery of Character



### MIZNER INDUSTRIES

In 1925 Boca Raton was a small farming community: a flag-stop on the Florida East Coast Railway. In that year Addison Mizner came to town with his dream of establishing a great new city with elegant resort facilities, miles of mansion-lined streets, and since his dream envisioned a true city able to support itself when the tourists went home, houses for workers, and the factories to employ them. From the beginning, he planned to either move his Mizner Industries' workshops from West Palm Beach, or at least build branches in Boca Raton. The Florida real estate bust came before any factories could be constructed in his new city, but Mizner Industries continued to produce tiles, cast stone, quarry key stone, and furniture in West Palm Beach. In fact, the cast stone factory remained in the same Bunker Road location until September 1978.

While Mizner established no workshops in Boca Raton, he did use the products of his industry in constructing the Cloister Inn, the Administration Buildings, Old City Hall, the houses of Old Floresta, and other buildings of the boomtime era. Moreover, the furniture for the Inn and Administration buildings also came from his factory. For many years this furniture went unappreciated. One attempt at "modernization" at the hotel led to the wholesale disposal of the Mizner pieces. Today the excellent design and quality workmanship of Mizner furniture is once more valued. Collectors vie for the remaining examples and articles are published in national magazines discussing its merits. In fact, in recognition of this new interest in the products of Mizner Industries, Singing Pines Museum has mounted a show displaying samples from the workshop.

This issue of the Spanish River Papers is particularly indebted to Mr. Jon von Gunst-Andersen, the archivist of the Mizner Collection of the Historical Society of Palm Beach County, who supplied the company brochures and photographs.

Donald W. Curl, editor

MAKERS OF THE ONLY HAND MADE ROOF AND FLOOR TILE IN AMERICA

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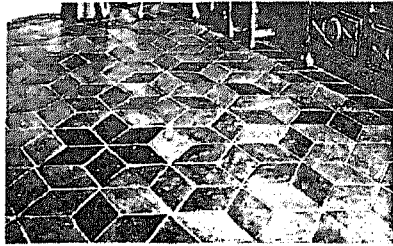
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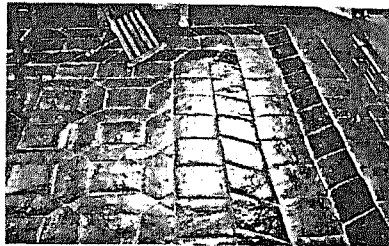
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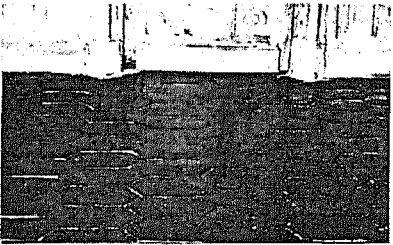
## MIZNER INDUSTRIES



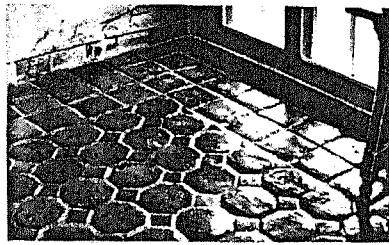
Pattern No. 1020. Glazed star center of No. 100 black glazed diamond with cube design of variegated transparent green glazed diamonds. Two rows of No. 100 black glazed diamonds with No. 105 3"x11" transparent green glazed tiles between make the border.



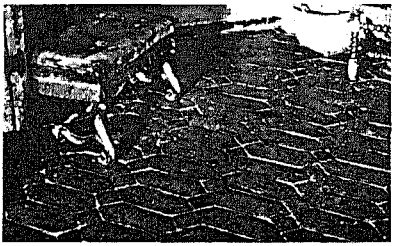
Pattern No. 1021. Suggested use of unglazed No. 102 8"x8" with No. 113 pickets. The No. 100 diamonds in the border design are brown glazed.



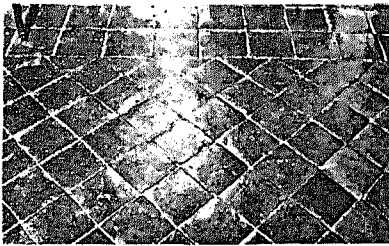
Pattern No. 1022. Number 113 unglazed Pickets make a pleasing floor. These are laid with close joints. Note the polish obtainable with our unglazed tiles.



Pattern No. 1023. The tile shown are unglazed. Field is No. 101 Octagons with No. 100 3"x3" inserts, border of No. 102 8"x8" and base 4"x8".



Pattern No. 1024 shows an interesting combination of No. 113 Pickets and No. 109 3"x3" unglazed tile. Base is black glazed No. 110 2"x8" tiles.



Pattern No. 1025 shows an attractive arrangement of border and field of same size tile. Nos. 102 8"x8", 104 12"x12" or No. 106 6"x6" tile can be used.

The various workshops of architect Addison Mizner grew from necessity. When construction began on the new Everglades Club in 1918 he found no good source of clay roof tiles. Imported tiles from Cuba were extremely expensive, and Mizner believed commercial American roof tiles looked like "painted tin" with the color of "a slaughterhouse floor." Mizner convinced Paris Singer, for whom he was building the club, to build kilns to make tiles in West Palm Beach. Mary Fanton Roberts, the publisher of *Arts and Decoration* wrote: "I remember that these tile works were established during my first visit to Palm Beach, and that we all went at day dawn to see the first opening of the kiln--from which the tiles were taken by the Italian workman, overburnt and ruined." By the trial-and-error method, Mizner soon discovered the key to producing perfect tiles.

When resorters arrived in Palm Beach for the 1919 season they found the nearly completed club house. Many, including the Edward Stotesburys, were impressed with Mizner's architecture and asked him to design vacation "cottages" for them in the town. Mizner said that at first Singer seemed "delighted", but later "got jealous" and decided to close down the pottery. As the architect believed he needed the handmade tiles for his roofs, he decided the only answer was to buy the pottery himself. Thus he borrowed money from a bank and established the first division of what became Mizner Industries: Las Manos Potteries.

Las Manos had three kilns in the beginning. The largest could hold ten thousand tiles, the second largest three thousand. The third kiln, intended for decorative pottery, could hold three hundred when necessary. To achieve the effect of the subtle variations in shadings of the tiles, Mizner bought white and dark Georgia clay. Through mixing, drying, and firing, he obtained tiles that ranged in color from flesh pink to almost black-brown. Using a mule to propel the blades, a mill blended and worked the clay. After it was greatly refined, workmen patted and thumped it into wooden molds that had been sanded to keep

it from sticking. The molds were then placed in carefully regulated dryers for three or four days, depending on weather conditions. After a worker drilled a small hole in each end to fasten the tiles to the roof, they went into the kilns to be fired at 2600 degrees for four days and nights. When Mizner purchased the plant he could fire thirteen thousand tiles every four days. As his building activity increased, and as other south Florida architects began to specify Las Manos tiles, he added kilns until ultimately seven were in operation.

Shortly after acquiring Singer's plant, Mizner began making floor tiles. At first he produced only plain unglazed handmade tiles. When treated and waxed according to the architect's instructions, the tiles achieved a rich shade of brown "which cannot be obtained by the use of paints, varnishes or other products." As demand increased Mizner produced floor tiles in different sizes and shapes and added glazed tiles. Later catalogues listed thirteen standard colors: Mizner blue (a distinctive turquoise), light blue, Valencia blue, light green, green, neutral green, Mizner yellow (another distinctive hue described as between mimosa and apricot), orange, red, brown, blue, blue black, and black. Although Mizner chose these shades "because of their harmonizing values," the pottery could produce other colors. Las Manos also made decorative pottery, either unglazed or in these same colors. The pots, from three or four inches in height to a size that could hold a large orange tree, were hand molded in standard shapes "made to follow as nearly as possible the original productions of old Spain." With the expansion of the potteries Mizner opened a shop on South County Road in Palm Beach to sell his various products.

In order to complete the Everglades Club, Mizner had been forced to establish workshops to make furniture, wrought-iron work, and lighting fixtures. Singer sold these various enterprises after the club opened. Shortly after Mizner acquired the potteries, he also began to reestablish the other workshops. Blacksmiths turned out wrought iron grills, gates, lanterns, andirons, and hardware "for every use." A furniture factory, established in 1923, produced both "antique" pieces and furniture designed by the architect. The large overstuffed "Papa Mizner chair," while obviously designed to fit the architect's great bulk, may also have answered the plea of a client who, when confronted with a house full of Spanish furniture, demanded a comfortable place to sit. The only concession to Spanish styling made in these chairs were their deep, rich colored velvet and brocade upholstery and gold fringes. A smaller version of the chair, dubbed the "Mama Mizner," was also available.

The architect also designed a line of wicker furniture including arm and side chairs, settees, and tables. These pieces, whose straight lines and simplicity made them quite modern in feeling, adapted well to the Florida climate.

The fame of the furniture plant rested upon its antique reproductions. Mizner did not turn out cheap copies of the original. Buyers purchased Mizner pieces because of the scarcity of the real antiques. Moreover, his factories specialized in "quality workmanship, not quantity." Contrary to late claims, he did not sell these items as original. His catalogues clearly showed them as reproductions made in his workshops. In fact, Mizner took great pride in the craftsmanship of his workers. He insisted upon the finest aged woods, that joints be carefully made and glued, and that the whole process be carefully supervised. To achieve the proper antiquity the piece might be scored with broken bottles to remove all rough edges, or beaten with chains to make the surface look well used. Several sources tell of ice picks, and even air-rifles, used to give the pieces the proper worm holes. A Mizner employee said the architect liked his furniture in repair. Since worm holes implied decay, they were not added to the finishing process.

Mizner Industries also developed a process to reproduce wooden ceilings, doors, and panels called Woodite. A plaster cast of the original was made to form a mold. Into the plaster mold a pulpy composite of wood shavings, plaster of Paris, and fibrous material was poured and then allowed to dry. The finished Woodite piece could then be treated like wood and stained, painted, nailed, or sawn. One writer said he saw the panels dropped from a height of eighteen feet, and treated with great roughness to show their sturdy qualities. He was also impressed when he learned that "knotholes, knots, grains, holes, worn spots, even the partially rotted portion" could be exactly reproduced.

For Mizner's first buildings in Palm Beach his contractor made cement molds for ornamental "stone" work on the job. In other cases, stone carvers created the needed effects. As the architect's commissions increased he found it necessary to produce ornamental stone work in great quantity. This led to the establishment of his cast stone plant. In the beginning Mizner produced his "stone" ornamentation for windows and door surmounts, columns, capitals, and balustrades by pouring plain cement into molds. From a distance the product looked like carved stone, up close it looked newly cast. Thus he constantly experimented to find a method to produce a more authentic appearing

stone. Later he tried casting in crude molds a mixture of cracked limestone gravel and cement. Workers then sculpted the roughness from the surface, thereby making it look like carved stone. He also experimented with color and shadings. At first he made only gray and white stone, but later he produced a substitute for travertine and marble.

In 1929 Mizner added another industry when he began production of Quarry Key Stone. He leased a quarry from the Florida East Coast Railway on Windley's Island near Islamorada in the Keys and began quarrying coquina rock. Brought to West Palm Beach in eight-ton blocks, the solid rock was then cut into building blocks. Mizner believed that the more attractive coquina would surpland "artificial" molded cement blocks as the major south Florida building material. The Palm Beach architect Maurice Fatio immediately contracted to use the new material for his own new house he was building on South Ocean Boulevard, another house in Palm Beach, and for one he had designed in California.

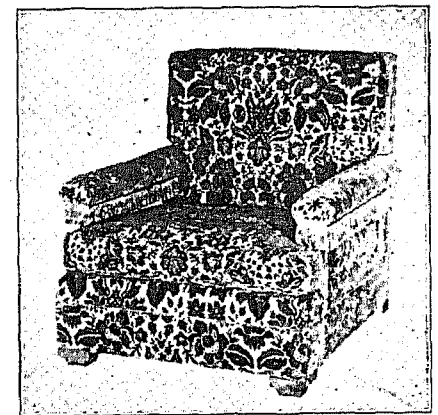
Mizner spent forty thousand dollars on equipment to handle the stone in West Palm Beach, including a gigantic new saw powered by a fifty-horsepower engine. He also spent over ten thousand dollars for equipment at the quarry. Unfortunately, the refinancing of the company which this necessitated came just before the Wall Street crash. Mizner Industries, Inc. had been organized in 1925 to acquire the various business interests developed over the years by the architect. These included Mizner Industries, Inc., and Antiqua Shops, Inc., Mizner's professional office, some of his workshops, plants, an antique business, and sales shops. A later reorganization in 1928 transferred to Addison Mizner, Inc. all the capital stock of Mizner Industries, along with its assets, liabilities, and a large stock of antique furniture "purchased abroad some years ago." The company, under its various forms, earned an average of thirty-nine thousand dollars a year throughout the twenties. When the new Quarry Key Stone Works investment was made, the company had a net worth of over a quarter of a million dollars. The Wall Street crash greatly curtailed construction, ending the demand for quarry stone. The "bust" came in 1931. The company went into receivership and in 1933 was sold in a sheriff's sale.

In 1925 Mizner had turned his attention to the development of his dream resort in Boca Raton. Although Boca Raton was designed to put both Palm Beach and Coral Gables to shame, Mizner realized the need to place his city on a strong economic footing. Tourists and resorters came to Florida for only a few months out

of the year. Thus he encouraged the establishment of various business enterprises, even platting what today would be called a "business park" and areas for workers' housing. Without question, he planned to relocate Mizner Industries in Boca Raton. When the Florida real estate boom went bust, and Mizner lost control of his development, he obviously changed these plans. The failure of Mizner's plans for Boca Raton also resulted in the loss of much of his own personal fortune. Much of his income in his last years was derived from the profits of Mizner Industries.

At its height, the Bunker Road location of Mizner Industries encompassed a maze of kilns, drying yards, casting and furniture factories, drafting rooms, and storage sheds. Mizner artists and sculptors such as Percival Dietsch created designs for the draftsmen and woodmakers who completed the drawings and castings for production. Every architect and builder in the Palm Beaches, and many throughout South Florida, looked to Mizner Industries for the items needed to decorate their houses and buildings. Thus Mizner tiles on the roof and the floor, Mizner iron work for grills, gates, screens, and lighting fixtures, Mizner cast stone for window and door surmounts, columns and capitals, and even Mizner lead and stained glass windows (enclosed in Mizner bronze frames), came to be a commonplace in Palm Beach houses. The Palm Beacher who claims to live in a Mizner house, though it was designed by Marion Sims Wyeth, Maurice Fatio, Bruce Kitchell, or John Volk, can thus be forgiven.

© Donald W. Curl



The "Papa" Mizner arm chair--and rather expensive by 1920s prices

No. 1011--Height 41 inches, Seat 38 inches x 43 inches as shown, Price \$350.

*From the Palm Beach Weekly News, 13 December 1918.*

...The self-same scenes of the Ancient Phoenicians or Egyptian potters is being enacted only a couple of miles outside our own city limits. The potteries of Paris Singer, located 500 or 600 yards back from Dixie Highway south of the Bunker's Landing Road are to the casual visitor, so interesting, as if he had been transported back to that age of lost arts. In fact, the setting, stern simplicity and primitive method of producing tile and pottery are so faithful to those early days that without railroad or Highway to remind you, you lapse back to days of Homer.

...Joseph Messinna, the potter in charge, is an Italian of the Roman type and fits into the ensemble with a convincing finesse. As for his sister, Anna, who oversees the finer work of glazing pottery, the only missing touch is a convenient well and earthen water jar balanced on her head.

...Mr. Addison Mizner is a lover of art and the old world, but with all intensely practical. Business acumen is necessary to build villas and club houses to transform jungle into horticultural feasts of delight, to put in operation the largest dairy south of Jacksonville and a few other minor details he has undertaken since last June. These undertakings, however, are all subservient to the one big idea--the making of the Singer Colony a paradise beyond belief.\* In making that atmosphere of the old world he loves so well Mr. Mizner buys tin spoons and art treasures, cement and linen, cows and clay.

The scenes of the Paris Singer pottery are incidental but must be depicted, for thereby are the true results of the art of perfectly blended coloring of tile obtained.

Mr. Mizner in his broad experience has found that the modern manufactures of tile can produce but one uniform color with any practicability. The roofs of the Singer Colony are everything in his strivings. These irregular, waving roofs must have a soft, vari-colored tone in harmony with different tinted villas, the waters of Lake Worth and the flowers and foliage of the surroundings. One general color would never do, neither would the product of several manufacturers, each of a different shade, serve this purpose. The matching and sorting of the tile would be tedious and expensive, furthermore, the effect on the eye would be mechanical and glaring.

Therefore with characteristic initiative Mr. Mizner established the Singer hand-made potteries, the only hand made potteries in the United States today. In a word he instituted old world methods to realize the old world effect.

Palm Beach County was selected for his potteries for business reasons solely. While the clay used comes from Georgia, the flat car rate on crude clay offsets his erecting potteries on the grounds of production for the reason that box car rates are high, breakage in this instance would be great and proximity to the Singer Colony under his own eye was essential.

The process of tile-making as undertaken here is simple in its primitiveness. The clay, once arriving is composed of the white and dark variety. Both are carefully screened and by a

\*The name Everglades Club had not yet been chosen for Paris Singers project.

judicious mixture of the white and dark earth, patient drying with practiced firing of the kilns, shades of coloring ranging from flesh pink to black brown are obtained. After screening and mixing the clay is shovelled into a pit and thoroughly soaked until the consistency of soft putty. From there it is shovelled into a clay mill and the faithful mule goes round and round with the extending arc propelling the clay knives. At the bottom of this clay mill is an aperture through which oozes the clay, greatly refined. It is next piled up and constantly kept moist until ready for the workers on the tables. Here are the forms where "the potter thumping his wet clay" pats, thumps, and cuts with the most primordial of wire contrivances, the clay into the different forms that range along the table. These forms are next placed in the dryers and right there great care must be exercised. It is of great importance that every precaution in the care of shade and sunlight be enforced, otherwise the tile will crack. Before placing in the molds the clay is sanded so the tile will not stick to the molds in the process of drying. The period of drying is dependable on the weather, usually from three to four days.

...The tile, once dried, is next drilled with one small hole at each end to enable means of fastening to the roof. Next comes the kilns, where the tile is piled in and the fires in the ovens started. The opening in the kiln is then tightly sealed with brick and clay, so that not a ray of heat may escape and degree to the 2600 point is reached and maintained for four days and nights. The tile, when through with the kiln is a finished product and each individual in its shadings, as only a hand-made tile can be. Proportionate mixture of red and white clay with handling in kiln, the gradation of heat in the baking produce the desired results.

The case of glazed pottery, urns, vases, garden pots, etc., is followed out along the same identical lines. On their leaving the kilns they are subject to a coat of glaze applied with a brush and then placed back in the kilns for another four days and nights at a temperature of 3000° to insure a thorough baking of the glaze. Symbols, figures, etc., are impressed as in all similar lines by molds, the coloring of the pottery, is, of course, done in the glazing.

Today, 20,000 tiles are ready for shipment across the lake.

The three kilns, one of 10,000 capacity, one of 3,000 and the third intended for the use of pottery only, accommodating 300 tiles, were all in full operation and doing their bit to help the roofs of the Paris Singer Colony vie with the flowers in the strivings of Mr. Mizner for fragrance and flowers, beauty and memories. . . .

### MIZNER CAST CUT STONE

MIZNER TRAVERTINE MIZNER VOLCANIC, MIZNER RECONSTRUCTED LIMESTONE, MARBLE AND GRANITE AND MANY OTHER FINISHES AND TEXTURES ARE OBTAINABLE.

Mizner stone products are not to be compared with ordinary imitations. A careful combination of ingredients and expert finishing produces results rarely equaled. High quality trim adds much to any building. Let us send you data on physical properties, and samples.

### MIZNER MARBLEIZED STONE

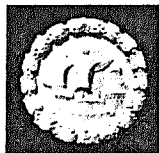
Rivals real marble. It is one of the newest Mizner products and one of the most beautiful. Get our samples. Send in your plans or sketches for estimates.

### MIZNER QUARRY KEY STONE

This stone is brought from our own quarry on one of the Florida Keys and is being cut and shaped in a new, modern plant. Beside the beauty of the stone, which is very generally conceded, we call your attention to the facilities we have for its production. Modern methods insure delivery, quality and better prices. Let us quote on your requirements.



No. 5014, 18".  
Price \$11.50.



No. 5015, 26 in.  
Price \$22.00.



No. 5016, 51".  
Price \$59.75.



No. 5017, 26".  
Price \$21.00.



No. 5018,  
18 in.  
Price  
\$12.00.



No. 5019, 6, 7 or  
8". Price \$17.25.



No. 5020, 6 in.  
Price \$17.25.



No. 5021, 8 in.  
Price \$17.25.  
Tile Top \$27.25.



No. 5022, 8 in.  
Price \$17.25.



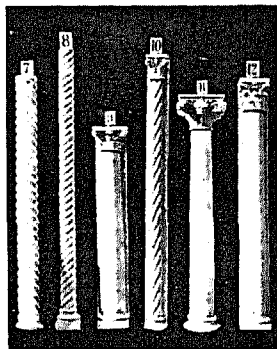
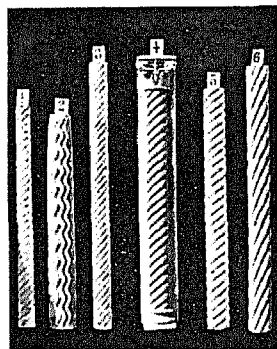
No. 5023, 8 in.  
Price \$17.25.



No. 5024,  
5 and 6".  
Price  
\$9.25.



No. 5025,  
5 and 6".  
Price  
\$9.25.



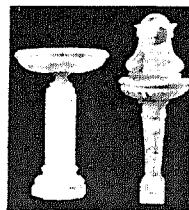
No. 5026,  
5 and 6".  
Price  
\$9.25.



No. 5027,  
12 in.  
Price  
\$6.00.

No. 1: 3 and 4 inches, \$1.10 per foot. No. 2, Roma, 6 inches, \$3.20 per foot. No. 3: 3 and 4 inches, \$1.10 per foot. No. 4: 6, 7 and 8 inches, complete with ground backing, cap and base, 3 feet, \$18.00 each. No. 5: Twisted, 4 inches, \$1.10 per foot; 5 inches, \$1.25 per foot; 6 inches, \$1.50 per foot; 8 inches, \$2.00 per foot. No. 6, same as No. 5. No. 7: 8 inches, \$3.25 per foot. No. 8, same as No. 5. No. 9: 6 inches, 6 to 8 feet long, \$16.00 each. No. 10: 4 inches by 6 feet 6 inches, \$12.00 each. No. 11: 6 inches by 6 feet to 8 feet, \$16.00 each, with cap and base. No. 12: 6 inches by 6 feet to 8 feet, \$16.00 each.

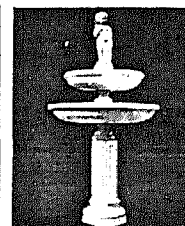
The designs illustrated in this folder are only a small part of our full line. Other prices on stock items upon application.



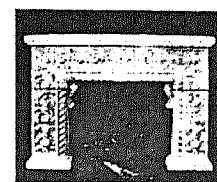
Nos. 5006 and 5007



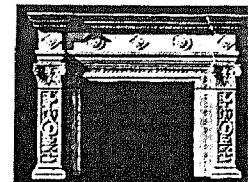
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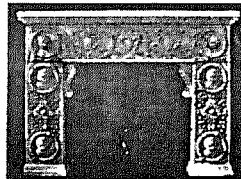
No. 5008



No. 5005



No. 5004



No. 5001



One of Our Artists At Work  
"Only the Best" is the motto of Mizner Industries. All of our artists are the best we are able to obtain

No. 5000. Opening 36"x40 1/2", width 48", height 58 1/2", projection 6". Shelf: length 53 1/2", projection 10". Price \$69.00

No. 5001. Opening 34"x30 1/2", width 54", height 44 1/2", projection 4 1/2". Shelf: length 58", projection 6". Price \$32.00.

No. 5002. Opening 50 1/4"x46 1/2", width 67", height 67", projection 8". Shelf: length 70 1/4", projection 10". Price \$109.25.

No. 5003. Opening 62"x46 1/2", width 78 1/2", height 69", projection 8 1/2". Shelf: length 81 1/2", projection 10 1/2". Price \$138.00.

No. 5004. Opening 42"x36 1/2", width 74 1/2", height 62", projection 10 1/2". Shelf: length 81", projection 10 1/2". Price \$115.00.

No. 5005. Opening 36 1/2"x29 1/2", width 60", height 46", projection 6". Shelf: length 64", projection 8". Price \$97.75.

All prices include packing and hauling. F. O. B. West Palm Beach, Florida.

No. 5006. Bird bath or fountain. Height 48 1/2", diameter 32 1/2". Price \$28.75.

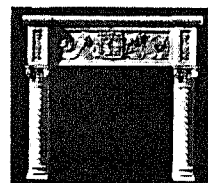
No. 5007. Wall Fountain. Height 63", width 25 1/2", projection of bowl 15", height of pedestal 36". Price \$40.25. Can be supplied without pedestal, No. 5007-A. Price \$12.00.

No. 5008. Fountain. Height 85", diameter large bowl 48", diameter small bowl 32 1/2". Price \$57.50.

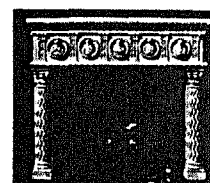
No. 5009. Garden Table. Height 33", width either 30" or 36". Price \$39.50. Can also supply 36" round top and pedestal, No. 5010 (not shown). Price \$39.50.

No. 5011. Bird Bath or Fountain. Height 44 3/4", diameter of bowl 25 1/4". Price \$39.75.

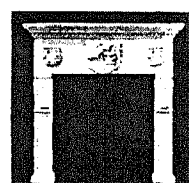
All prices include crating and hauling. F. O. B. West Palm Beach, Florida.



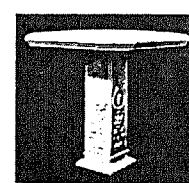
No. 5002



No. 5003



No. 5000



No. 5009

Taken from "The Mizner Industries," by Alex Waugh, (January 1963).  
Historical Society of Palm Beach County.

...Addison had set up workshops in West Palm Beach and they went far to meeting the problem though few people realize the immense complications and difficulties Addison faced in getting the various plants into operation.

Take the example of roof tile alone. These were required by the hundred squares at a time if the houses he was building were to be roofed at all, but they had to be the rounded Spanish tile, and they were not to be had for love or money. So they had to be made and made locally and in sufficient quantities to meet the demand and right there the first snag arose. Where to find the right clay? And how to transport it over the then rough trails to a main road, itself a cart track compared to what we see today in Florida. And having done that, who knew how to construct a kiln and fire it? And, anyway, with what did one line the interior of a kiln? And how about firing temperatures? All these problems, and they were both acute and serious in implication, had to be solved, and Addison the one to solve them.

Railroad carloads of clay were brought from Georgia, crude kilns were constructed, fired with logs of pine, near the railroad tracks in West Palm Beach, and the factory for roof tile, floor tile and various other glazed clay products flourished busily. The first of its output were the roof tiles for the Everglades Club, finished in 1919.

Again, take the lovely glazed floor tile in the Mizner Blue variety for which he became famous. Thousands were wanted, but how about the right pigments to stand up to kiln heat, and what about color blending for the various shades of tile to be made, for the average layman does not realize that a cerulean blue starts life, before firing, as maybe a muddy buff color. So, who, then, knew how to mix the pigments and just how long were the tile to be in the kiln. All these problems had to be worked out by very untrained labor.

When in Spain I was confounded by Addison's purchases of iron work. Balconies and rejas, those often lovely window grilles, I could understand, but how explain the massive purchase of odds and ends, often broken or with parts missing, and looking as if they were only good for the junkyard in which he generally bought them. Scrolls, fractured balusters, strap hinges with no butts, bits of wrought iron screening, door furniture, door latches without the latch, if you know what I mean, ring knockers without their boss--the variety endless, the condition deplorable. What I didn't realize, however, was that there was enough left of the original to gauge its design and purpose or that it could be repaired and, even more important, enlarged and extended to meet a new purpose.

But when we got to Palm Beach Addison told me to load the whole lot onto a truck, any old way, and get it over to the shops, and I quickly began to understand things formerly hidden in mystery. Addison would spend hours going over all these oddments and out of them would emerge some most lovely things--stair balusters which started life hundreds of years ago as a garden railing, elaborate strap hinges made up out of half a dozen completely different things. The list was endless but more significant was the imagination that went to their conversion for to Addison a bit of iron-work had the same substance and ease of working as putty and,

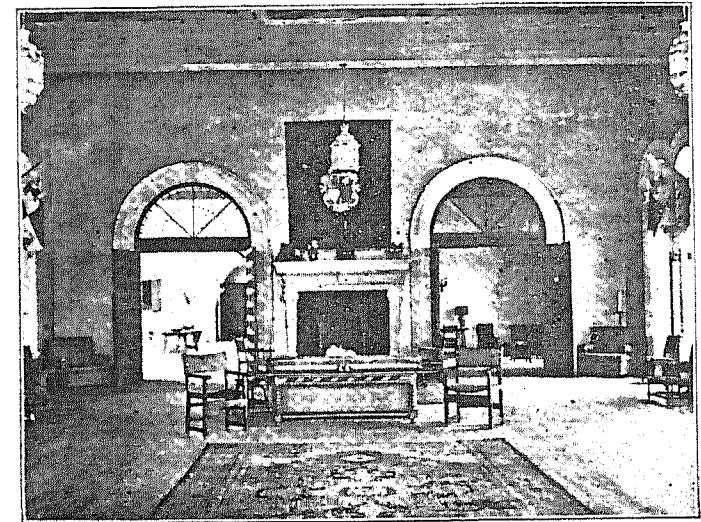
moreover, if he wanted something, he stayed with it until it came out just as he expected to see it. This special ability of fashioning something out of nothing is a gift allied to determination to bring it about. Iron workers were imported from Italy and soon the iron forge was an important department in the Mizner Industries as need for iron ornamental accessories increased.

When it came to furniture, the shops were invaluable for they not only turned out really splendid reproduction Spanish furniture, but they repaired and made sound much we brought in and which had been damaged in transit.

So it was that Addison's creed came down to the view, "if you can't get it, make it. But make it good and make it authentic." When furniture reproductions for Addison's Boca Raton projects were underway, the furniture factory was much expanded, and continued to be a busy enterprise as long as the building "boom" continued to gather momentum.

I think he was the first to realize the genuine beauty of Pecky Cypress and introduced it widely. A soft wood, with innumerable shakes and knot holes, it is, I believe, virtually unserviceable in the same way as pine or deal but not so to Addison. He at once realized it had about it an appearance of age which, when used, for example, as false beams, had great beauty which was again enhanced if skillfully painted. An example which comes to mind of its splendid use is a great beam, painted a soft blue and wiped over with white and charcoal, in one of the smaller rooms in the Everglades Club, as indeed in many other of his houses.

So it was that Addison's shops "grew up" like Topsy, that they kept on growing and branching out into new fields of production, each beautiful, serviceable and certainly different. One thing was insisted upon and that was good design and its supreme importance in even the tiniest detail, or conversely, the elaborate and devious cursing that greeted the man who fell below this level of attainment....



# MIZNER INDUSTRIES INCORPORATED

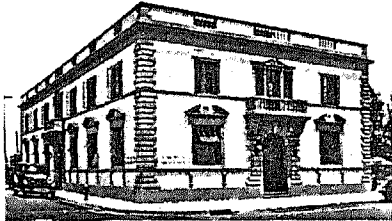
POTTERY - ROOF & FLOOR TILE - PERIOD FURNITURE - WICKER - UPHOLSTERING - REPAIRING  
 ANTIQUE MILLWORK AND HARDWARE - BRONZE SASH - WROUGHT IRON  
 STAINED AND LEADED GLASS WINDOWS - RECONSTRUCTED AND  
 ORNAMENTAL STONE IMITATION MARBLE  
 QUARRY KEY STONE

337 Worth Avenue  
 P. O. Box 2068

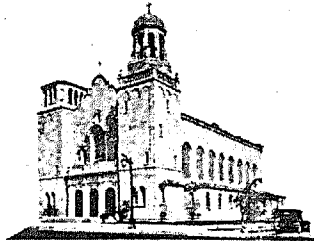
PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

Telephone:  
 OFFICE 2-1193  
 FACTORY 7343  
 SHOW ROOMS 2-2538

Factory:  
 PENN ROAD  
 WEST PALM BEACH  
 FLORIDA



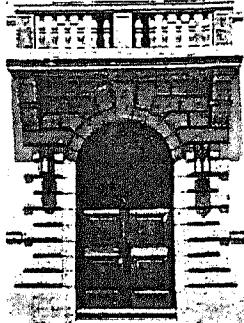
Gulf Stream Title & Mortgage Co.



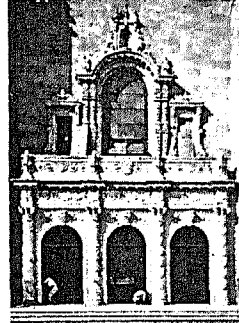
St. Edward's Church



Interior of above.



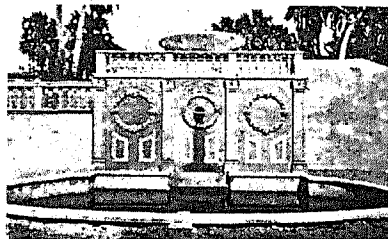
Entrance of above.



Entrance St. Edward's Church



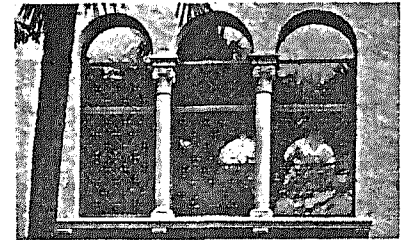
Royal Palm Way Building  
 Mizner Cast Stone was used in the building shown above. Note the varied style and texture.



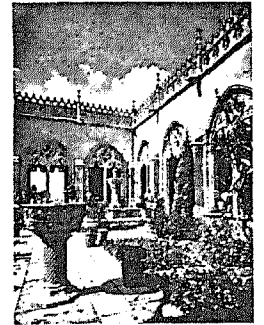
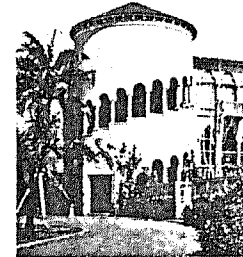
Fountain at residence of Mr. Geo. Rasmussen, Palm Beach



No. 5012. Price \$168.50 per one opening complete.  
 Each additional opening \$113.50.  
 Size 3'-6" between jambs. Columns 4'-6" on center. Height may vary.



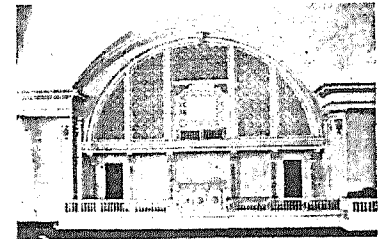
No. 5013. Price \$24.00 for cap, column and base.  
 Send us your plans for estimates on stained and leaded glass windows with or without steel or bronze sliding sash.



The buildings above show only casually the quality of Mizner Industries Stone. Samples of the texture and testimonials as to the excellence of our product furnished upon request.



Part of the Cloister, Cloister Hotel. The detail and hand tooling do not show. The pottery, wicker, wrought iron tables and Spanish lanterns supplied by Mizner Industries. Literature furnished upon request.



Small portion of plaster work done for the First Church of Christ Scientist, Orlando, Florida. One of many excellent precast and run plaster contracts we have completed with high praise from the owners. Screen work as shown costs about \$3.00 per sq. ft. Send plans for complete estimates.

"New Mizner Industries Planned," *The Palm Beach Post*, 4 April 1929.

...Another forward step for West Palm Beach was marked in the city's history Wednesday with the dedication of an additional industry at the plant of Mizner Industries, Inc.

Employing 40 persons with a permanent investment of \$40,000 locally in equipment, Mizner Industries, Inc., will start supplying the country with various products obtained from coquina rock. Brought to West Palm Beach direct from the company's quarry at Key Largo, in large eight-ton blocks, the solid rock is cut down to size, planed off if needed, patterned if necessary, in fact, handled just as similar products would be if made artificially, and turned out ready for a job.

Walls, terraces, interior decorating work, bathroom fixtures, the field is large, will be turned out as needed and the local concern has agreed to handle a carload of coquina rock a day from the quarry.

Several hundred persons visited the plant Wednesday afternoon and watched the big saw slowly eating its way through the huge blocks, cutting them into two-inch slabs, getting them ready for the huge plane which is yet to be installed. A 50-horse power motor drives the saw blade, while a three-horsepower motor pushes the saw into the stone.

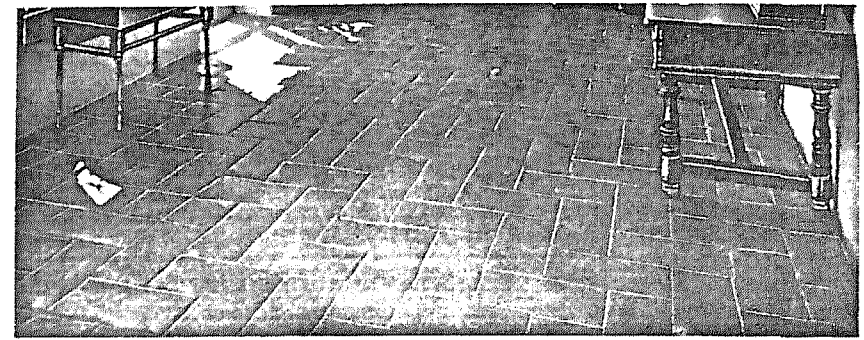
While the new addition to Mizner Industries, Inc., is in its infancy, Addison Mizner, visions great expansion in the near future. Total investment in the new project is now about \$75,000, including the cost of equipment and installation at both the local plant and at the quarry. The employment of 40 persons will take place in the next 30 days, as speedily as the full quota of machinery is installed. The payroll will increase as the plant grows.

Orders are now arriving from all over the country. Mayor Barclay H. Warburton of Palm Beach, who made a short talk to the crowd Wednesday, showed where Florida rock was being used in the construction of a California home. Maurice Fatio, Palm Beach architect, having the designing of a building on the Pacific coast, has put in his order for rock from Mizner Industries.

H.G. Wagner, superintendent in charge of the new plant, is a sculptor of no mean ability and an expert in his line. With Mr. Wagner already on the field, installation of the machinery is being supervised by W.J. McGarry, sales manager of the Patch-Wagner Company, Rutland, Vermont. Mr. McGarry was in West Palm Beach on a vacation when the machinery arrived, but is in daily attendance at the new plant and will be until everything is in ship shape and ready to be turned over to the owners.

Addition of the new plant raises the investment of Mizner Industries, Inc., in West Palm Beach to approximately a half million dollars. A payroll which will run around \$6,000 weekly is estimated for the summer, and if orders for the new product increase as is expected, there will be another expansion in the near future.

It was rather a gala occasion Wednesday. Refreshments were available for all and the full cigar box was in evidence for the masculine visitors who desired to smoke.



No. 1032. Suggested use of No. 103 8"x16".

ALL PRICES F. O. B. FACTORY

Mizner Glazed Tile may be obtained in the following colors: Mizner Blue (Turquoise), Light Blue, Valencia Blue, Light Green, Green, Neutral Green, Yellow, Orange, Red, Brown, Blue Black and Black. Write for information regarding colors not listed.



**100**  
Diamond



**100A**  
Half Diamond



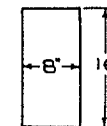
**100B**  
Half Diamond



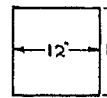
**101**  
Octagon



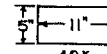
**102**



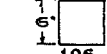
**103**



**104**



**105**



**106**



**107**



**108**



**109**



**109A**



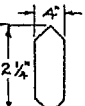
**110**



**111**



**112**  
Horse Tile



**113**

Picket



**114**

Hexagon

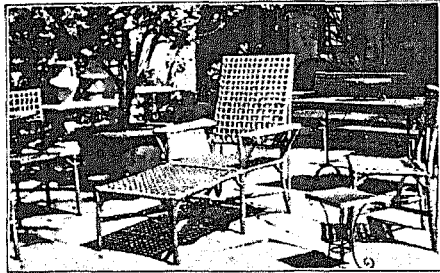


**115**

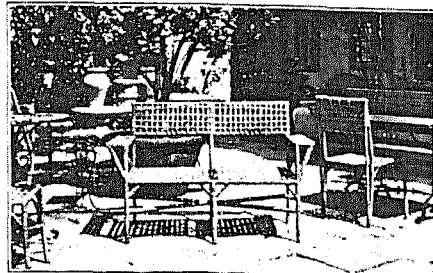
Triangle Insert

The Mizner Industries Incorporated assumes no liability for the correctness of estimates made for tile dealers, or statements not in writing signed by its authorized officers. All estimates, quantities and prices must be rechecked, and the responsibility assumed by the tile contractor.

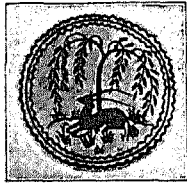
Prospectus of Mizner Industries, Inc. Typewritten Manuscript, no date -- c. 1928. Archives of the Historical Society of Palm Beach County.



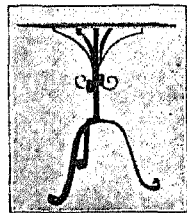
No. 1081—Mizner Wicker Chaise Longue.



No. 1082—Mizner Wicker 2-Seat Settee.



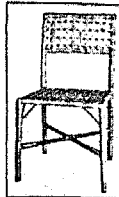
Top



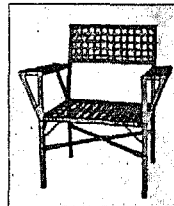
No. 1079 Price as shown, \$55.00.



This stairway shows a use of Mizner tile. The risers are in variegated colors.



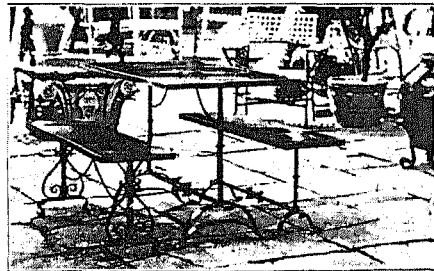
No. 1038 — H. 35 inches, Seat 18 inches x 18 inches, Price \$11.75.



No. 1037 — Ht. 32 1/2 inches, W. 30 inches, Price \$15.75.



Wicker furniture is excellent for outside terraces.



No. 1078 Price Set, \$125.00 Solid Colors. Legs either design.

**HISTORY OF THE PLANT:** The tile factory of the Mizner Industries was established in 1919 for the convenience of the clients of Mr. Addison Mizner, architect. Mr. Mizner was unable to secure the materials needed to produce the beautiful residences he was being commissioned to build in Palm Beach. Tile at the time was only obtainable at great cost by importation, and domestic tile was in no way suitable for the work, and a local factory which could produce a suitable material had to be built to satisfy the needs of these clients.

Because of the beauty of the tile produced, Mr. Mizner was induced to expand the institution to make pottery. This was followed by furniture, antique doors, antique millwork, and iron work about 1922 and 1923. These departments met with very marked success and in 1925 a cast stone factory was built, which altho started late in the year was able to produce a tremendous volume of work occasioned by the demands of the Florida real estate "boom." Then followed the quarry key stone factory, and other smaller additions to already existing departments. ...Each separate tile is made by hand in a rather moist state, hand surfaced, air dried, and burned in wood burning kilns. This gives a texture, density, finish, irregular color, and variation of surface which it is impossible to obtain unless the same materials are used. ...it was originally Mizner tile which created the demand for this kind of material. ...It would be very disappointing to get a floor laid in tile and find that it failed to come up to your expectations. It is too expensive to remove.

MIZNER INDUSTRIES, INC.

Statement of net worth, and of net income from the operation of pottery, stone, furniture, and iron departments, for the years 1923 to 1929, inclusive.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NET WORTH</u>	<u>PROFITS</u>	<u>%</u>
1923	\$ 54,000	\$ 5,000	9
1924	63,000	22,000	35
1925	170,000	152,000 (a)	89
1926	143,000	<u>Loss</u> 27,000 (b)	--
1927	181,000	38,000	21
1928	245,000	64,000	26
1929	262,000	17,000	6
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b><u>\$160,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 39,000</u></b>	<b><u>24</u></b>

(a) After deducting bad debts totalling.....\$150,000.00

(b) After deducting bad debts totalling..... 96,000.00

From "Mizner Industries," by Don Morris (West Palm Beach, 1929).

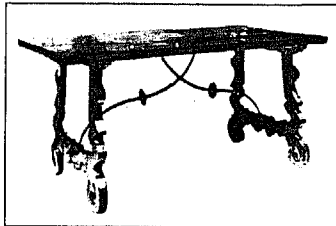
### Furniture

...To meet the needs of a rapidly growing community, and in order to obtain a superior product, it became necessary for the Mizner Industries to undertake a new enterprise. In 1923 furniture manufacture was started. A modest plant provided for the immediate requirements. This has since been enlarged to handle the increased business.

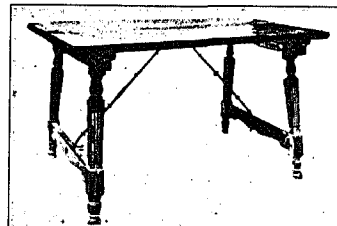
The furniture unit holds a unique position. In a distinctly modern world we have a factory making "antique" furniture. For example: given one half of a door of the Sixteenth Century, the Mizner Industries will make the other half with age, worm holes and all the scars of Time. If you have a Seventeenth Century chair and need two, take it to the furniture factory. They will faithfully reproduce it. It is claimed by visitors that it is practically impossible to pick the original from among the reproductions. Quality workmanship, not quantity, makes this possible. Only the finest material is used. Some raw material is aged before using. Joints are carefully fitted, embodying the finest construction possible in cabinet work. Every piece is permanently built, and it is said by persons considered authorities that these reproductions being so faithfully done, will be very valuable with age. Certainly wonders in wood are being done in the Palm Beaches.

The Mizner Industries have also created something not found elsewhere. It is the Mizner chair, a distinctive product; a deep, soft, upholstered chair you will never forget. Sitting in one is like resting in a fleecy cloud. They are covered in a great variety of fabrics and colors to suit every taste. The writer was much impressed by the vast array of reproductions. It seems as though everything has been made. In fact, it is impossible to visit the Furniture Department without seeing something one wishes to carry away with them.

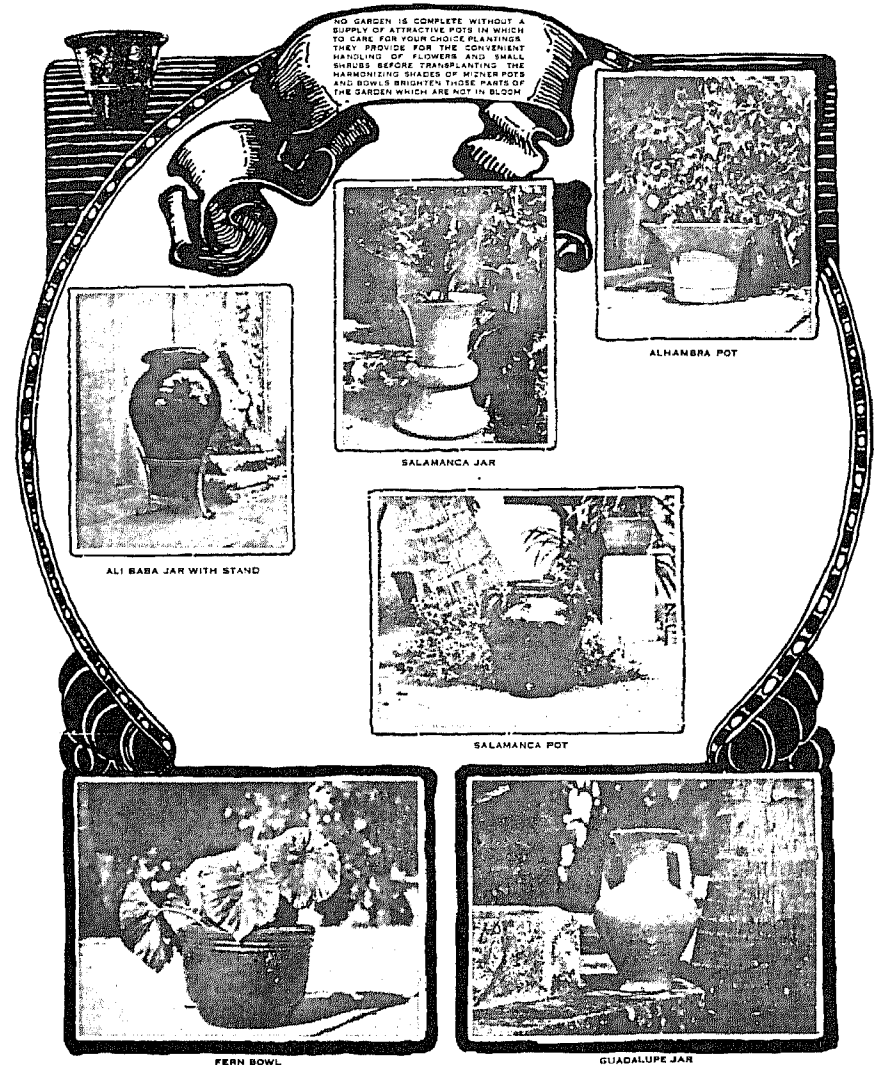
Expert repairs are being made to furniture which was recently damaged. By substituting new pieces, carefully, painstakingly, fastening all parts which had become loose, and then by skillfully finishing both old and new products, and the ones requiring hand painting, the pieces came forth with all traces of the damage removed. It certainly is an impressive sight to see something apparently damaged beyond repair made whole again....



No. 1051—H. 33 inches, Width 32 inches, Length 5 feet 6 inches, Price \$250.00.



No. 1050—H. 31½ inches, Width 35 inches, Length 4 feet 6 inches, Price \$275.00.



ALI BABA JAR WITH STAND



SALAMANCA JAR



ALHAMBRA POT



SALAMANCA POT



FERN BOWL



GUADALUPE JAR

BOCA RATON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
P.O.Box 1113 - Boca Raton, FL 33432

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